Internet exchanges

975. SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of internet exchanges in the country;

(b) what steps are being taken by Government to facilitate setting up of the same; and

(c) the extent of international bandwidth available to international users within the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Government has facilitated the setting up of Internet Exchanges in the country at four locations viz. Delhi (NOIDA), Mumbai, Chennai and Kolkata. Exchanges at Delhi (NOIDA) and Mumbai are operational. Chennai & Kolkata Exchanges are going to be operational soon. 15 Internet Service Providers (ISPs), 12 at Delhi and 3 at Mumbai, are already connected to the exchange.

(c) International Long Distance (ILD) Service has been opened up for private participation since 1st April, 2002 and there are 4 operational ILD operators. In addition ISPs have also been permitted to set up International Gateways for Internet using satellite and submarine cable medium after taking necessary clearances. As a result of these steps, sufficient international bandwidth is available to the users in the country.

Promotion of free/libre and open source software

976. SHRI EDUARDO FALEIRO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) what steps have been taken since the announcement of the Linux India Initiative by Government on the issue of promoting free/libre and open source software within the country;

(b) the level of usage of FLOSS products in Government and semi-Government organizations; and